

**Recommendations for Improving Racial Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in the  
Department of Earth Sciences, University of Oxford**

**Full Departmental Response to Report**

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(N.B. As in the original report items are colour-coded to those groups in the department that the items most relate to: **U.Grad.** relates mostly to Undergraduates students; **P.Grad.** relates mostly to Postgraduate students; and **All.** relates to items affecting all members of the department. These distinctions are not clear-cut and it is our hope that actions aimed at one particular constituency will nonetheless benefit all members of our department.)

**1. STUDENT RECRUITMENT**

**1.1 Teaching and Recruitment**

**IMPLEMENT**

1. **U.Grad.** *Ensure that the diverse pathways from school to a geoscience degree are well-highlighted on the department website, with clear case studies from current students where appropriate.*

**Response:**

Great suggestion. Many of the case studies highlighted on the website are now several years old and need updating. We plan to update these and will also revisit the content on our pages for Outreach and Careers. Updates can take time, but we will look to have these changes in place ahead of the start of the next academic year.

2. **U.Grad.** *Ensure that the department is engaged with efforts to improve the teaching of geoscience-related subjects (e.g. geology, geography) undertaken by the UK's learned societies by establishing a point of contact, and sharing best practice*

**Response:**

Our undergraduate course is accredited by the Geological Society of London. The Department and many faculty maintain direct communication with this and many other learned societies through various channels. Our external relations manager has sought actively to ensure representation of learned societies at Departmental careers events, which is helping current undergraduates to access their potential benefits.

Oxford Earth Sciences Visiting Professor Mike Daly is taking on the role of President of the Geological Society this month. In advance of this new position, he has been discussing ways to improve engagement with universities, to re-evaluate the role the Society can play in broadening access to geosciences, and in widening participation of its membership. Prof Daly has already consulted with students and staff within Oxford Earth Sciences, and his tenure as president will help us continue to forge closer and more effective ties with the Society. In particular, we will improve the links to outreach and Earth Science teaching resources developed by the learned societies and will share these more widely on our website and social media channels.

## CONSIDER

3. *U.Grad. Encourage each of the department's research groups to produce a simple resource (talk, animation, video, slides etc) on a topic of their choosing to showcase the diversity of research within geosciences, and link to this on the website under a 'resources for teachers' section.*

### **Response:**

It would be wonderful to have a digital resource for each research group, particularly during these times of remote learning. The Department is always trying to encourage and support research groups to engage with outreach and showcase their research, with regular Departmental communications advertising the many internal and external opportunities, training, and funding available. These opportunities include University and Museum-led initiatives such as Oxford Sparks, Oxplore, OU Museum of Natural History Super Science Saturday events (amongst many, many others), and Open Days, at which we encourage all groups to have a live, hands-on demonstration of their research. Sadly, not all research groups have yet been involved in these outreach activities. However, those that have produced video or audio resources have been actively promoted on our Departmental website and social media channels. We will seek to consolidate existing resources into the Outreach section of our website and will continue to promote and encourage research groups to develop and create new resources.

4. *U.Grad. Implement a one-day taster session targeted at BAME school students from younger demographics than may be reached by UNIQ (e.g. Year 8)*

### **Response:**

The Department tries to engage with school students of all year groups wherever possible through inbound and outbound school visits, and by active participation in the organisation and running of University, Museum and MPLS Departmental-outreach events. We are keen to engage with all groups whose socio-economic circumstances may mean they have not had access to Earth Science resources or to Oxford. Over the course of the past year, we have welcomed 28 inbound school visits (groups of up to 30 students at a time, across a range of ages from Year 8 to Year 12). Many of these groups come from areas with a higher proportion of BAME

students, including East Ham, Hackney and Bedfordshire. We are also partnering with colleges to develop Earth Sciences resources that can go out to schools in target areas and to support teachers.

The UNIQ summer schools reach students from socio-economically disadvantaged areas. We are planning to run an additional, single-day UNIQ event in 2021, at which a great number of UNIQ applicants can attend the residential courses, and which we hope will include a greater number of BAME candidates.

5. *U.Grad. Assess whether the department can organise a day-long teacher information session during the summer vacation, for school teachers interested in the geosciences and in position to advertise the course to other under-represented groups.*

**Response:**

The Department has already been exploring the implementation of summer schools for teachers. A few months ago, the costs of running such an event, even for one day, were looking very prohibitive, especially as we would not want teachers to have to incur large expenses in travelling to and from Oxford. However, since the global pandemic, we have all adapted to a new remote-working environment, and this opens even greater possibilities for running teacher information sessions. There may be numerous ways in which we engage with teachers, including pairing with colleges.

The remit of any geoscience information day for teachers would need to be considered carefully. There are numerous groups already supporting teachers with geoscience learning. The Geological Society of London hosts the [Geoscience Education Academy \(GEA\)](#). This is a free, fully accredited CPD training course for UK teachers. There is also the [Earth Science Teachers Association](#), which provides resources for supporting the teaching of Earth Science through Geology, Geography and the Sciences. We could and should do more to promote these excellent resources to teachers, whilst also recognising that it may be better to pair with and support existing societal groups and activities, rather than duplicate or detract from the work they are undertaking by hosting our own independent courses.

The Department commits to making information about Earth Sciences available to teachers, and to hosting events to explain the nature of Earth Sciences and the excellent career opportunities that it presents for students. We will aim to provide this within the 2020/21 academic year.

6. *U.Grad. Explore how best to expand efforts to attract sixth-form students interested in allied disciplines (mathematics, materials, physics) to consider geosciences as an undergraduate course of study.*

**Response:**

We are continually exploring new ways to attract and engage sixth-form students in allied subjects. We regularly receive requests for inbound visits from school groups interested in general science subjects, and we take every possible opportunity to welcome them with a taster lecture introducing them to Earth Sciences and

interactive tours around our labs. Many of these students are unaware that Earth Science is a subject they can choose to study at University. We often receive great feedback, and we know that some of these students have gone on to apply. Over the past 18 months, we have doubled the number of our outreach events. Earth Sciences is an active participant in collaborative outreach events, including those aimed at recruiting students to less conventional science subjects (e.g. the Further Maths What Next and Lesser Spotted Science events, which aim to showcase new subjects to students).

We are also exploring the possibility of offering work experience placements for local sixth formers interested in learning more about Earth Sciences. This would add a considerable demand on HR administration but could be an option if projects were faculty or researcher-led.

We are currently in discussions with MPLS to develop new cross-disciplinary events targeting younger and more diverse audiences. Instigating the teacher-specific sessions (see Point 5, above) is another way we might engage with students who might otherwise seek to apply to degree courses in other sciences. There is always more that can be done, and we are open and receptive to suggestions on how we can improve.

## 1.2. Familial/Cultural Expectations

### IMPLEMENT

7. *U.Grad. Hold 'parents-only' and 'students-only' parallel sessions at the open day to ensure that both parties have a chance to freely ask questions about an unfamiliar subject without fear of embarrassment / conflict.*

#### **Response:**

This is something the Department has done in the past and opinions were varied on the success. We found, as you imply, that parents preferred to go to the same sessions as their children to make their own mind up about the course. We are happy to try separate sessions again at future Open Days, and will see if there are ways in which we can differentiate the sessions for candidates and parents. Unfortunately, due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, our July Open Days have been moved online to Virtual Open Days at short notice, and it is unlikely we will have time to create a specific online resource for 'parents-only' in time for this. However, we will try to create this in time for our September Open Day, and to trial separate sessions again at a number of future Open Days.

8. *U.Grad. Produce an application guide for parents, addressing common questions about the degree and especially doing fieldwork. See also section 2.1 Field Work.*

**Response:**

The University currently produces a guide for parents and carers, but we can develop additional resources online to address common questions, including our field components. From our experience, many questions at Open Days revolve around career prospects for our students and costs of study. This item will be actioned.

CONSIDER

9. *U.Grad. Consider the best way in which to showcase the diversity of careers (other than oil/gas and mining) and potential security of income associated with a rigorous geosciences degree when advertising our course.*

**Response:**

The Department is currently undergoing a course and field work review, with likely changes to the way the course is structured. To accompany this, there will be a review and update to our course marketing materials, in which we will highlight the diversity of careers and very employable status of our students upon graduating. Our students go on to a huge variety of careers in finance, media, management consultancy, risk analysis, natural resources, teaching, environmental consultancy, property development, marketing, think tanks, civil service, law, and journalism, to name but a few. We try our best to encourage current students to engage with our alumni base to find out more about these diverse opportunities, by hosting our annual careers event and inviting students to build their networks and attend our alumni events.

In addition to the above, our external relations officer has been working closely with Abby Evans, our Earth Sciences contact at the University Careers Office, to develop a new brochure on Careers for Earth Sciences. We have also been working with Elizabeth Crowley to create a new area within our departmental library to store careers information and resources to help our students with job applications, provide guides to different sectors as well as books on diversity in geosciences. The development of these resources and creation of a new section in the library takes time and will be a gradual project over the coming year.

Another idea currently being explored is to work with the student Oxford Geological Society to implement a new in-house seminar series on careers. This would involve inviting alumni from different job sectors to present to current students. The idea was for this to take place on a Friday afternoon, such that the speaker could then attend departmental happy hour and answer any further questions. All of the above initiatives can and should be actively promoted to prospective students to address

the concerns raised, and more can certainly be done to update our current external website in the interim.

10. *U.Grad.* Explore how to best advertise the course with the issues above in mind, seeking input from current BAME students and academics.

**Response:**

The Department welcomes the input of current BAME students and academics, and indeed feedback from all members of our community. We are very happy to take a consultative approach to development of marketing materials for the course.

### 1.3 Cost

#### IMPLEMENT

11. *U.Grad.* Expand the section on the department website about field work to give further details on funding for both UG travel (specifically the mapping project), including examples from past years.

**Response:**

Our field work section on the Department website currently lists details about each undergraduate field course. All costs for field courses are covered by the department, and we do not make any extra charges to students for such course. The website has a dedicated section on field work costs and links to sources of additional funding for additional field-based projects. We already provide examples and suggestions from current students.

12. *P.Grad.* Give full support to internal University efforts to abolish the graduate application fee.

**Response:**

The Department of Earth Sciences fully supports the internal efforts to abolish the graduate application fee. Our Head of Department personally signed the petition on this issue. Our department has taken its own initiatives in the past to try and tackle this issue. We have been unable to prevent the central university from charging the fee, but we had a policy in place for a number of years to offset any travel costs for attending postgraduate interviews up to £75 (the cost of the admissions fee). This is explained on our Departmental [website](#). While this is not a perfect solution, we hope that it helps to alleviate some of the financial burden to prospective students.

### 1.4 Role Models and Outreach

#### IMPLEMENT

13. *All.* Encourage and nominate BAME members of the department for both showcase programs (e.g. the MPLS Beyond Boundaries initiative) and recognition awards where appropriate.

**Response:**

We are very happy to nominate BAME members of the department for awards in recognition of their work and achievements. We are also very happy to support BAME members from the department where they wish to put their names forward for specific programmes, such as the MPLS beyond boundaries initiative. We wish to avoid, however, giving BAME members of the department the impression that they are obligated to volunteer for things, or feel they are being asked or nominated to do more than others in service to the department. Our department is small and, as noted, our BAME members are low, but that is our issue to solve not theirs.

14. *P.Grad. Develop a PG-level outreach program designed to showcase students from ethnic minorities and encourage candidates from under-represented background to apply.*

**Response:**

The Department of Earth Sciences has committed to the UNIQ+ scheme for 2020 onwards. UNIQ+ is a summer graduate access research internship programme, which builds on the success of our UNIQ residential courses for school students. It is intended to encourage access to postgraduate study from talented undergraduates who would find continuing into postgraduate study a challenge for reasons other than their academic ability. Earth Sciences is one of a number of MPLS departments participating in the scheme via the NERC Doctoral Training Partnership.

In addition to this commitment, we are developing a new Postgraduate prospectus for Earth Sciences, which will be available in print and digital format to advertise our DPhil experiences more widely. We will seek to develop more resources, including informative case studies, on our external website and can explore the possibility of a postgraduate Open Day further. Unfortunately, limited resources and staffing mean that it is extremely challenging to develop a comprehensive postgraduate outreach program that mirrors the undergraduate schemes. However, it is hoped that investment in undergraduate outreach and widening participation will broaden the diversity within our undergraduate community, which will hopefully transfer to postgraduate research.

15. *All. Celebrate the diversity and success of BAME department members specifically, for example Black History Month (which may include all BAME people).*

**Response:**

We are always happy to promote members of our department who are willing to feature in departmental news stories, or to take part in social media profiles. We acknowledge that there is more we can do to engage through social media and our Marketing & Communications Assistant will be focussed in the coming months on creating posts for awareness months/days. Part of this will involve inviting members of our community to take part in these, and inviting input on the building of these

campaigns. We are happy to use the Atrium Screens in our department to showcase and promote members of the department.

## CONSIDER

16. *P.Grad. Investigate how best to attract undergraduates from allied disciplines to consider geosciences as a postgraduate course of study.*

**Response:**

Our existing graduate community in Earth Sciences has members from very diverse subject backgrounds, including graduates of zoology, physics, maths, and data science. How attracted students will be to any course will be dependent on the projects available. These projects are themselves dictated by the researchers within the department. We can and certainly will endeavour to promote the available projects as widely as possible through our website and social media channels, and through producing a postgraduate prospectus which broadly outlines some of the key topics and sources of information on these.

17. *U.Grad. Ensure that when planning outreach activities only open to/targeting one particular under-represented groups, the full spectrum of potential intersectional issues is considered, such that no unintended biases are introduced. See also 3.1. Intersectionality.*

**Response:**

Due to the small size of our Department, Earth Sciences tends not to organise and host outreach events in isolation (for example, the administration, application to, and evaluation of, UNIQ are handled by the central University). We also do not host events that are only open to one under-represented group. However, we do and will always endeavour to ensure that no unintended biases are introduced. We understand that this must be under continual scrutiny and welcome feedback.

## 1.5 Departmental Marketing Materials

### IMPLEMENT

18. *All. Extend the diversity of activities and fieldwork locations showcased in promotional materials to be more representative of both the topics and locales of study within the department, including computational or theoretical topics; and fieldwork being done by academics in non-European or developing countries.*

**Response:**

As outlined earlier, the Department is currently undergoing a course and fieldwork review, with likely changes to the way the course is structured. To accompany this, there will be a review and update to our course marketing materials, which will reflect the course more closely.

While the marketing material should attract students to Earth Sciences as a subject, it also needs to accurately convey the Oxford Earth Sciences course. In the past we have refrained from including stock images of fieldwork being done by academics in locations not visited as part of our undergraduate course, so as to not mislead potential applicants. While there is an argument for including great pictures of, for example, Tarje's seismic field work detecting elephants in Africa, it could be viewed as misleading because the topic and fieldwork are not an integral part of what they will be studying on their 4 year course. When the new marketing material is produced, we will of course be more than happy to consult on this with current staff and students, welcoming feedback and input on these.

## CONSIDER

19. *P.Grad. Consider holding a specific PG Open Day and/or 'PG application advice day,' the latter targeted at students from non-geoscience undergraduates or under-represented backgrounds.*

**Response:**

The Department is very happy to host a postgraduate open day. We will need to work closely with the Academic Office and other internal departments to identify the most appropriate time of year for this. Unfortunately, an in-person event prior to 2021 may not be possible due to the ongoing pandemic, but we will endeavour to produce some online resources (videos, presentations and links) on our website. We could also look to host a live online Q&A or Facebook live event.

## 1.6 Admissions

As far as the department is aware, the report cited here demonstrated that there was **no** statistical evidence for bias. Offer rate gaps between candidates from different backgrounds could be accounted for by prior attainment, course choice, and performance on admissions tests. Our Department does not use any admissions test in our admissions process, precisely because we think having an extra test might provide a disincentive to candidates from under-represented backgrounds to apply. We welcome the University's provision of much richer contextual information on disadvantage in educational background in the 2019-20 admissions round.

## IMPLEMENT

20. *U.Grad. Build upon the commendable roll-out of unconscious/implicit bias training for all UG interviewers by also introducing specific racial awareness training (available through the University).*

**Response:**

A great suggestion and one that Oxford Earth Sciences is more than happy to commit to undertaking.

21. *P.Grad. Build upon the DTP's introduction of unconscious bias training by mandating all PG interviewers to undertake it.*

**Response:**

As above, the Department are more than happy to commit to this. We will check course availability and implement.

## 2. INCLUSION

### 2.1 Fieldwork and field courses

#### IMPLEMENT

22. *All. Ensure that new students have the opportunity to take part in an 'ask me anything' about fieldwork before their first trip, guided by older students present to discuss.*

**Response:**

The Induction for Undergraduates at the end of Fresher's week and prior to the Pembroke field trip is very tight on time – a great deal of information needs to be conveyed and covered. We have already introduced a short session led by Issy Walker, which openly discussed some of the more sensitive challenges of field work such as dealing with periods and toileting in the field. This was an attempt to do away with any embarrassment or pre-conceptions around this, and to encourage students to ask questions on any topics that might concern them. The session was well received and had a positive impact for students on the Pembroke trip. We welcome the suggestion that a forum led by current students (and not staff) may help, and we will do all we can to facilitate this in the timetabling.

In 2018, the Department has also established a 'Women in the Field' Working Group to discuss challenges faced by female geoscientists. Plans are now under way to change the remit and focus of this group to 'Diversity in Geoscience,' which broaden the scope to address other issues and concerns around field work and within the geosciences more generally.

23. *All. Ensure that all students have the opportunity to take part in optional de-escalation training to deal with situations and/or experiences of racism which may occur in fieldwork.*

**Response:**

The Department is not aware of any de-escalation training available within the University and asks the authors of the report to please provide more information on this, if they are able. The Academic Office will continue to investigate a source of information and training.

24. *All. Ensure that there exists clear alternative provision for students unable or willing to undertake fieldwork for reasons of ethnicity or race (in addition to other reasons for which policies already exist); and staff are aware of racial concerns when suggesting mapping project locations.*

**Response:**

Fieldwork is an integral part of any accredited undergraduate Earth Sciences course. Nevertheless, we do occasionally have students who are unable or unwilling to participate in fieldwork for a variety of reasons. These cases have been discussed via the Academic Office on a case-by-case basis, and alternative learning provisions have

been sought where appropriate. With the ongoing global pandemic, many of our field courses planned for the 2019/20 academic year have sadly had to be cancelled. However, faculty are working hard to develop new resources for virtual field courses, which will not only benefit current students but provide alternatives for any future students unable to undertake fieldwork.

Mapping projects form an integral part of the undergraduate degree. Students have always had the freedom to choose their own mapping project locations from a range of options, or can nominate their own localities based on individual preference. Where individuals are unable to conduct field mapping projects, provision is made for alternative lab-based or computer-based projects.

## CONSIDER

25. *U.Grad. Explore whether the repertoire of field trips can be expanded or modified to cover more diverse topics within the geosciences (e.g. relating more directly to natural hazards or populations), to emphasise that geosciences are relevant to modern, urbanised populations.*

**Response:**

We are currently mid-way through a course and field course review, and the diversity of geosciences topics covered is already being considered, including the reinstatement of a geophysics component. Arguably, our current 3<sup>rd</sup> year field trip to Greece and Santorini covers many of the natural hazard and human-impact related aspects of Earth Sciences, and we would like to preserve these aspects in the revised course.

26. *U.Grad. Ensure that when fieldwork is discussed in an outreach context, care is taken to leave potential students reassured about what is required from them in terms of fieldwork.*

**Resources:**

This is a valid suggestion and is already being undertaken during sessions that introduce Earth Sciences to new audiences. For many, fieldwork and travel are one of the more appealing aspects of subject. Nevertheless, we also recognise that for others, it could present a more daunting and unfamiliar prospect. We are working to revise the marketing for our course such that the emphasis between fieldwork and lab-based work is balanced, and to provide ample information on our website about what students can expect from fieldwork.

## 2.2. Alcohol

### IMPLEMENT

27. *All. Engage with the OUGS committee to discuss the inclusivity of their events, including the provision of non-alcoholic drinks and the existence of any kind of 'initiation,' even an optional one, under pressure of alcohol consumption.*

**Response:**

This is something that we communicate to them every year, and we will continue to do so.

28. *P.Grad. Diversify the opportunities which PG students have for undertaking 'community service' to include events benefitting the wider community or events which do not include alcohol.*

**Response:**

It is clear there is a disconnect between what the department thinks it is asking of its PG students in regard to community service, and the PG community's perception of what we are asking. We do not require any PG student to participate in 'community' service. We do invite 1<sup>st</sup> year students to volunteer to organise the Department's Christmas party (where students, staff, and their families, including young children, all attend); the weekly 'happy-hour' that includes both alcoholic and non-alcoholic options; and the graduate mini-conference. These three events were initiatives that originated with the student body over a number of years. Nevertheless, it is clear that communication of the origin, rationale, and purpose of these events has not been as clear as it could or should have been. We will take this forward with the PG community in the Department to have an agreed form of communication surrounding these three events in particular.

More broadly postgraduate students also have many opportunities to participate in the academic community of the Department throughout their studies in events that not involve consumption of alcohol, including seminars, hosting visiting speakers, workshops, conferences and discussion groups, along with the outreach and public engagement opportunities advertised regularly.

## 2.2 Harassment Support

### IMPLEMENT

29. *All. Seek a BAME member of staff or academic who is willing to receive training and be added to the list of department harassment advisors, or else seek someone from a nearby department and clearly advertise their contact details.*

**Response:**

HR will seek volunteers for this and will also ask other departments across the University.

30. *All. Expand the department's peer support network to include PG students, and ensure if possible that at least one member at both PG and UG level is BAME.*

**Response:**

The Academic Office have been investigating peer support networks and training for PG students and have had some volunteers come forward. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to ensure that the peer supporters are BAME, as it is dependent on people coming forward to volunteer for these roles.

### 2.3 Outreach Support

#### IMPLEMENT

31. *All. Enable members of the department to easily log outreach activities that they have taken part in, and provide department-sponsored recognition of this effort.*

**Response:**

All members of our Department (UG, PG, researchers & faculty) are encouraged to inform our Departmental external relations manager of any and all outreach activities that they undertake for record keeping. At present, there is no formal method for recording this, but we can certainly look to develop this further. Wherever possible, the Department tries to recognise outreach efforts. We actively promote outreach volunteers on our website and social media. We also have our annual award for Earth Sciences Outreach.

32. *All. Create regular forums which students and staff engaged in outreach and widening participation may come together to share ideas and thoughts. Ensure that participants are empowered to choose areas of greatest need and activities of greatest effectiveness.*

**Response:**

The External Relations Officer will, from MT2020, onwards set up a regular outreach meeting for volunteers to attend. If uptake and enthusiasm among Departmental members is strong, an outreach committee could be formed to move this forward. All Department members are free to engage with outreach activities as they choose, with multiple projects available through the University, colleges and within our Department, as well as many local and national initiatives. Suggestions for new activities are welcome, but Department resources are limited. Regrettably, we are not always able to provide projects with the financial support, staffing or student-time requested.

33. *All. Include in long-term financial planning a strategy for paying students to take part in some (or all) department-sponsored outreach activities, as is the case in other departments (e.g. Physics).*

**Response:**

Earth Sciences currently pays UG and PG student ambassadors for assistance during lengthy outreach events (3+ hours). This includes all open days and the UNIQ summer schools. We currently do not pay students to support short outbound

school visits or inbound lab tours (lasting 1 – 2 hours), for a number of reasons. Unlike Physics and Maths, Earth Sciences is a small Department, without the financial resources to cover this. We would like to encourage students to get involved with outreach for reasons other than financial gain.

## 2.4 Seminars

### IMPLEMENT

34. *All. Consider how the academics invited to deliver the seminar series can be diversified, for example by inviting younger academics who tend to have better BAME representation; and require the organisers to report back to the department's Equality and Diversity Committee on a termly basis outlining the steps taken towards these aims.*

**Response:**

This is an excellent suggestion, and we will implement this. Our experience with online seminars during the Covid pandemic is leading us towards a more virtual format. Next academic year, we are allowing speakers to attend virtually if they choose. This will enable individuals who cannot travel (e.g., caring responsibilities) to speak to our Department. It will also allow us to select from a broader range of individuals. We are committed to expanding the diversity of speakers to our Department.

35. *All. Follow the lead of other departments in increasing the diversity of topics in the seminar series to include geoscience policy, societal implications and diversity/inclusion.*

**Response:**

The Department seeks to have a balance of topics in our seminar series, and our seminar series has already included seminars on geoscience policy, geoscience in society, and diversity in the geosciences. We will continue to host seminars in these areas, while recognising that, as a science department, the majority of seminars will address science questions.

## 2.5 Course Structure and modules

### IMPLEMENT

36. *U.Grad. Encourage lecturers to modify courses as appropriate such that students are made more aware of the historical, social, or cultural contexts in which presented scientific discoveries were found. This might include discussion of the historical geosciences and indigenous or minority communities.*

**Response:**

We will encourage our faculty to take these issues into account when developing reading lists and course materials. More generally, we are in the midst of a course

review, with the aim of revising and updating our curriculum. This presents an opportunity to further consider the then-prevalent social and cultural settings in which the scientific discoveries were made.

37. *U.Grad. Ensure that modern, translatable skills (e.g. coding) are as integrated into the UG degree as possible.*

**Response:**

Coding is already an integral part of our course, with students being introduced to coding in their first year, and the lab sessions involved in a number of courses in subsequent years (Statistics, Mathematical Tools, Geophysics and Climate) involve using those coding skills to address specific topics within those subjects. A significant fraction of 4<sup>th</sup> year projects also use and develop coding skills. More generally, we are in the midst of a course review, with the aim of revising and updating our curriculum, and the provision of key transferrable skills is very much at the centre of our thinking in that process.

CONSIDER

38. *U.Grad. Consider whether the creation of different 'streams' within the undergraduate degree might attract students with a more diverse range of backgrounds who might not consider a course perceived to be pure 'geology.'*

**Response:**

The Department is currently undertaking a comprehensive course review, including changes to modules and field courses. This includes considering the continuity and effectiveness of our coding provision and other translatable skills, the visibility of diverse Earth Sciences topics under the umbrella of our course, and the clarity of our marketing material. This also includes a review of the reading materials for each course. We thank you for these suggestions and can assure you that they will be taken into due consideration through the review process.

2.6 Continuing action

IMPLEMENT

39. *All. Create a forum in which BAME members of the department are able to raise concerns and/or ideas, the setup of which can be decided by the relevant members of the department.*

**Response:**

We welcome the creation of any forum or working group, and any ideas or suggestions that might arise from this. As explained under point 22, we had already planned to change the 'Women in the Field' working group to 'Diversity in Geosciences,' with a view to providing a safe space for discussions on gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and other measures of diversity within the

geosciences. The structure of this working group is not yet formalised and is open to consultation from the relevant parties.

40. *All. Ensure that channels exist for regular engagement with groups working on diversity and inclusion both within and outside of the university, including student groups and initiatives within Oxford (e.g. Oxford Afro-Caribbean Society, Campaign for Racial Awareness and Equality).*

**Response:**

We are more than happy to promote channels of communication with groups outside of our Department or the University, and we can provide links to these through our website where appropriate. Societies would be welcome to present within the Department at, for example, the Monday Brown Bag meetings.

41. *All. Ensure that appropriate resources are allocated to deal with the items within this report which the department chooses to address.*

**Response:**

We are currently being proactive on many of the items outlined in this report. These matters are timely, and concerted efforts have been ongoing in a number of the areas suggested for many years. The report has also flagged up issues that we had not been aware of or inadvertently omitted from consideration. We very much welcome the report and the perspective it provides. We are committed to implementing further changes wherever possible, and this will be appropriately resourced. Some projects may take time to develop and deliver, but we are confident that a great many will be in place for the next academic year.

42. *All. Commission an external review of issues relating to BAME representation and inclusion to follow up from this report after the department has had sufficient opportunity to respond.*

**Response:**

We look forward to further consultation with our staff and students to ensure that ideas and feedback are heard and actioned wherever possible. This will be gradual and long-term project, but one we hope will continue to evolve and improve with time and input from our community.